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FROM: Brussels

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 907, June 7, 6 p.m.

Duvieusart accepted Regent's request to form government today. Government may be formed tomorrow.

PSC leaders at present envisage Cabinet as per EMBTEL 896 June 6 with Eyskens Economic Affairs, Meurice [redacted] Defense, and Van Houtte (Senator, Ghent professor, and former Eyskens pupil) Finance.

MURPHY

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755.00/6-750

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

REVIEWED BY Howard Mayes DATE 11/16/82
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EXCISE

TO : Department of State 755.00/6-2750

EUR INDEX

JUL 3

July (OVER)

FROM : Brussels 858, June 27, 1950

REF : Embtel 913, June 8, 1950

SUBJECT : THE DUVIEUSART CABINET

755.00/6-2750

(F = Flemish, W = Walloon)

Prime Minister.	Jean DUVIEUSART	W
Minister of National Defense.	Henri MOREAU DE MELEN	W
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Commerce.	Paul VAN ZEELAND	W
Minister of Justice	H. CARTON DE WIART	W
Minister of Finance	J. VAN HOUTTE	F
Minister of Interior.	A. de VLEESCHAUWER	F
Minister of Economic Affairs.	Gaston EYSKENS	F
Minister of Public Works.	A. COPPE	F
Minister of Communications.	P. W. SEGERS	F
Minister of Labor and Social Security.	Oscar BEHOGNE	W
Minister of Agriculture	P. M. ORBAN	F
Minister of Public Education.	Pierre HARMEL	W
Minister of Colonies.	Pierre WIGNY	W
Minister of Public Health & Family. . .	A. de TAEYE	F
Minister of Reconstruction.	A. DEQUAE	F

DCR UNA OLI USUN ce

The Duvieusart Government which is the first one party Government in Belgium since 1917 and which may well restore Leopold to his throne is headed by fifteen Ministers whose average age is just under fifty even though the Minister of Justice, M. Carton de Wiart is 81. The youngest of the six new Ministers, M. Dequae (Reconstruction), is 34 and their average age is forty. Thus the Cabinet is not apt to shrink from new ideas. Eight, or over half of the group, are considered in the left or social wing of the Social Christian Party.

[redacted]

Although it is a young Cabinet, it is not lacking in experience. Eleven of the group have previously been Ministers and seven of them have previously headed the same Ministry.

Prime Minister Duvieusart is a hard-working, but somewhat neutral person. His role may be to coordinate the Ministers rather than to lead them.

The most capable and influential man in the Cabinet is M. Van Zeeland, the Minister for Foreign Affairs. He has a brilliant mind, expresses himself lucidly, and his practical and theoretical background in economics is very valuable. Politically he is in the right wing.

CBWood:mh

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M. Eyskens, the former Prime Minister, is also influential and two of the new Ministers, Van Houtte (Finance) and Dequae (Reconstruction) are his followers.

Geographically the Cabinet is divided between eight Flemings and seven Walloons with a Walloon Prime Minister. Thus the balance is very even. However, if the Ministries were allotted by population, the Flemings would have a greater majority.

Professionally the Cabinet is somewhat of a brain trust with eight professors or teachers. This is because public figures in Belgium frequently devote some of their time to teaching. Eleven have law degrees and six have specialized in economics or finance. It is curious that only two have any real interest or experience in agriculture although farmers and part time farmers remain the largest single occupational group in Belgium.

Biographic Data on all the Ministers has been submitted since their appointment on June 8.

Chalmers B. Wood
Third Secretary of Embassy